

LISTING OF CLAIMS

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18 at least a second stopper supporting member fitted to an outer surface of
19 said second tubular member;
20 said second stopper supporting member having a third end and fourth,
21 opposite end; and
22 said second end of said stopper supporting member having substantially the
23 same outer dimensions as a third end of said second stopper supporting member.

1 2. (Original) The stopper device according to claim 1, wherein said stopper
2 supporting member has a tapered shape, with a diameter gradually increasing from
3 said second end to said first end.

1 3. (Previously presented) The stopper device according to claim 1 further
2 comprising:

3 a rotation operating lever, pushing said stopper against or moving said
4 stopper away from an outer surface of said second tubular member, thereby
5 causing said stopper to prevent said second tubular member from moving when
6 said stopper is pressed against said outer surface, or causing said stopper to permit
7 said second tubular member to move by releasing said stopper from being pressed
8 against said outer surface;

9 first and second bearing portions, facing each other at opposite ends of said
10 stopper supporting member;

11 a stopper supporting hole, between said first and second bearing portions;

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12 said stopper supporting hole formed at about a midpoint along an axial length
13 of the overlapping portions of the first and second tubular members;
14 said stopper fitting in said stopper supporting hole.

1 4. (Previously presented) The stopper device according to claim 2 further
2 comprising:

3 a rotation operating lever, pushing said stopper against or moving said
4 stopper away from an outer surface of said second tubular member, thereby
5 causing said stopper to prevent said second tubular member from moving when
6 said stopper is pressed against said outer surface, or causing said stopper to permit
7 said second tubular member to move by releasing said stopper from being pressed
8 against said outer surface;

9 first and second bearing portions, facing each other at opposite ends of said
10 stopper supporting member;

11 a stopper supporting hole, between said first and second bearing portions;

12 said stopper fitting in said stopper supporting hole;

13 a supporting shaft portion of said rotation operating lever being supported by
14 said first and second bearing portions, permitting rotation thereof.

1 5. (Previously presented) The stopper device according to claim 3, wherein
2 said stopper supporting hole is formed at the overlapping portions of the first and
3 second tubular members.

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1 6. (Previously presented) The stopper device according to claim 4, wherein
2 said stopper supporting hole is formed at the overlapping portions of the first and
3 second tubular members.

1 7. (Original) The stopper device according to claim 3, wherein said rotation
2 operating lever has an operating tab portion having a shape corresponding to the
3 outer shape of the stopper supporting member.

1 8. (Currently amended) A stopper device comprising:
2 a stopper;
3 a first tubular member;
4 a second tubular member fitting inside said first tubular member;
5 said stopper controlling movement of said second tubular member with
6 respect to said first tubular member;
7 a stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said first tubular
8 member, supporting said stopper;
9 said stopper supporting member having a first end and a second, opposite
10 end;
11 said second end being proximate to a location where said second tubular
12 member slides in and out of said first tubular member;
13 a first diameter of said first end being greater than a second diameter of said
14 second end;

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15 at least a second stopper;
16 at least a third tubular member;
17 said third tubular member fitting inside said second tubular member;
18 said second stopper controlling movement of said third tubular member with
19 respect to said second tubular member;
20 at least a second stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of
21 said second tubular member;
22 said second stopper supporting member having a ~~first~~ third end and a ~~second~~
23 fourth, opposite end;
24 said ~~second~~ fourth end of said second stopper supporting member being
25 proximate to a location where said third tubular member slides in and out of said
26 second tubular member; and
27 a ~~first~~ third diameter of said ~~first~~ third end of said second stopper ~~support~~
28 supporting member being substantially the same diameter as said second diameter
29 of said second end of said stopper supporting member, whereby when said second
30 tubular member is completely inserted in said first tubular member, said stopper
31 supporting member meets said second stopper supporting member, forming a
32 substantially even outer surface therebetween.

1 9. (Original) A telescopic unit comprising:
2 a first tubular member;

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3 a second tubular member disposed in said first tubular member, moving
4 along an axis of said first tubular member whereby the distance by which said
5 second tubular member projects from said first tubular member is adjusted by
6 moving said second tubular member;

7 a third tubular member disposed in said second tubular member, moving
8 along an axis of said second tubular member whereby the distance by which said
9 third tubular member projects from said second tubular member is adjusted by
10 moving said third tubular member;

11 a first stopper controlling movement of said second tubular member along
12 said first tubular member;

13 a first stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said first
14 tubular member, supporting said first stopper;

15 a second stopper controlling movement of said third tubular member along
16 said second tubular member;

17 a second stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said
18 second tubular member, supporting said second stopper;

19 a first facing end of said first stopper supporting member facing said second
20 stopper supporting member;

21 a second facing end of said second stopper supporting member facing said
22 first stopper supporting member;

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23 said first facing end being located adjacent to said second facing end when
24 said second tubular member is adjusted to project from said first tubular member
25 by a minimum distance; and
26 said first facing end and said second facing end having substantially the
27 same outer dimensions.

1 10. (Original) The telescopic unit according to claim 9, wherein said first
2 stopper supporting member and said second stopper supporting member together
3 form a continuously tapered shape when said second stopper supporting member is
4 adjusted to project from said first tubular member by a minimum distance.

1 11. (Currently amended) A stopper device according to claim 1 further
2 comprising:

3 first and second bearing portions disposed on said stopper supporting
4 member;

5 a stopper supporting hole between said first and second bearing ~~portion~~
6 portions;

7 said stopper supporting hole formed at about a midpoint along an axial length
8 of an overlapping portion of the first member and an overlapping portion of the
9 second tubular member; and

10 said stopper fitting in said stopper supporting hole.

